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Jung and Swedenborg: modern Neoplatonists

Abstract: The article brings to light many points of agreement between Jungian psychology and the Neoplatonic worldview of Late Antiquity. Also the worldview of Emanuel Swedenborg is compared with Jungian ideas. Swedenborg ought to be regarded as Jung's true spiritual father. The technique of active imagination, practiced by Swedenborg and Jung, is reevaluated. The ideal of worldly fulfilment is criticized. The idealistic world of Neoplatonism belongs in the unconscious, but not in the outer world.

Keywords: Neoplatonism, Swedenborg, Proclus, C.G. Jung, unus mundus, active imagination, synchronicity, correspondence, spiritual influx, analytical psychology.

Introduction

According to Carl Gustav Jung, the *archetypes* are universal, archaic patterns and images residing in the *collective unconscious* as the psychic counterparts of bodily instinct. They are hidden autonomous forms, thus independent of consciousness, largely self-willed, having a 'luminosity' of their own. The archetypal images are moulded by the individual context and the history of surrounding culture, providing them with their specific content. As inherited potentials they manifest as symbolic imagery and in collective movements in the outside world. Jungian archetypes depend on the *archetypes-as-such*, empty forms or predispositions. These take expression as diverse mythological motifs, such as the anima, the hero, the trickster, etc. The term archetype is commonly used interchangeably as referring both to *archetypes-as-such* and archetypal images. The archetype can be experienced introspectively. It can also be deduced by examining art, myth, fairy tale, religion, and — most importantly — dreams (cf. Wiki, 'Jungian archetypes', here).

Jung rejected the *tabula rasa* (blank slate) theory of human psychology. During evolution, patterns typical for human individual destiny have manifested as archetypes. Typical life-courses or roles in human society, such as the 'king' or the 'shaman', have become imprinted in our common psychology. The archetypes form a substratum common to all humanity. The representations themselves are not inherited, merely the forms. The archetype in itself is empty form, a possibility of representation which is given a priori.

Jung came to conceive of archetypes as psychophysical patterns that have their abode in a transcendental layer of the universe, the *unus mundus*. Thus, Jung's idea of archetypes belongs in the Platonic tradition of transcendental Forms as underlying the structure of both psyche and world. He held that the archetype has a dual nature: it exists both in the psyche and in the physical universe at large, an idea deriving from Neoplatonism and Proclus (see below). Jung used the adjective *psychoid* to denote the transcendental and psychophysical aspect of the archetype. He propounded that archetypal structures govern the behavior of all living organisms, including the behaviour of inorganic matter.

Thus, the archetype-as-such represents a bridge between psyche and matter. Jung employed the term *unus mundus*, a scholastic notion meaning unitary reality, to denote the layer that underlies all manifest phenomena. It is best viewed as a pre-existent *unconscious* psyche that organizes matter. (Jung viewed God as an unconscious world soul, on lines of Schopenhauer.) Archetypes at this transcendental level are intermediaries of psyche and matter. They are the organizing factors behind psychic ideation and the archetypes of the unconscious, but they have also given rise to the physical laws of matter and energy. Examples of archetypal phenomena and figures are: Natural Number (1,2,3…), Apocalypse,

Deluge, Creation, Birth, Death, Initiation, Marriage, The Union of Opposites (Conjunction), Great Mother, Father, Anima (Maiden, Virgin), Shadow (Devil, Vagrant), Self (King), Dragon, Child, Wise Old Man (Shaman), Hero (ibid.).

To account for the instantiation of archetypes in the material world, which is *influx* in Neoplatonic language, Jung invented the term *synchronicity*. Synchronicity denotes an acausal principle of coincidence, inherent to the cosmos, which gives rise to causally unrelated events that have the same underlying archetypal meaning. Thus, a psychic event in an individual can materialize in the outer world as a meaningful coincidence (a *synchronicity*), depending on the temporal preponderancy of an archetype.

Number and Time

Jung's foremost pupil, Marie-Louise von Franz, wrote the most thorough account of Jungian metaphysics involving synchronicity in her book Number and Time (1974). It is von Franz's most abstruse work, something which she later admitted. It was only written because Jung requested it. She says that the term *transcendental* is used only in the relative sense of "transcending consciousness". It should not be seen as an otherworldly transcendence in the absolute sense (cf. von Franz, 1974, p.9). Still, she goes on to define a transcendental reality in the absolute sense, which is "completely transcendental" and "incommensurable" with material reality. It is a "potential reality", which means that it is not real, although it can become real by manifesting in reality. Yet it contains "absolute knowledge" and "luminosity". The "primal forms" possess "self-consciousness", "quasi intelligence", and "active intelligence" (cf. pp.172, 199-201). It is contradictory, because this is not possible in so far as they are mere potentials and lack autonomous existence.

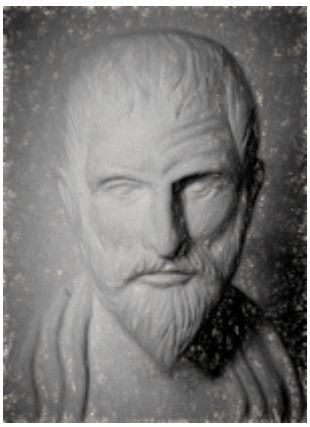
The *unus mundus* is a timeless and acausal orderedness, underlying both the psyche and the outer world. The transcendental aspect of *number* is foundational to the unus mundus and thus also to reality. Besides the quantitative aspect of number, there is also an eternal intuitive and qualitative aspect. For example, von Franz characterizes the number three as "the rhythmic configuration of progressive actualizations in human consciousness and the material realm" (ibid. p.101). The natural numbers, as the most fundamental archetypes, are common denominators of matter and psyche. As archetypes of the psyche, they have a *psychoid* aspect, that is, they overlap outer material reality; a characteristic that becomes visible in synchronistic phenomena. Thus, the unus mundus is responsible for synchronistic acausal coincidences as acts of creation in time. Yet, the forms of all the "empirical phenomena" are also inherent to the unus mundus (cf. p.173). Thus, the unus mundus is also the birth ground of causality. It may give rise to causal chains to boot.

Synchronicity is defined as the coincidence of inner meaning and outer happenings. But this would imply that synchronistic events could never have occurred earlier in history, when there were no minds capable of experiencing meaning. So how could the unus mundus manifest before there were minds, thus giving rise to the empirical world? The answer is that synchronistic events may also occur wholly independent of the "inner meaning" of the human mind. That's why von Franz cites Jung as saying that the unus mundus contains "absolute knowledge". Although the significance of a synchronistic event may only be experienced subjectively, "the meaning may also have been originally present in the objective event itself; something rational or similar to meaning may inhere in the event itself" (ibid. p.200). In order for the synchronistic notion to work independently of the human mind, as a world-creating force, Jung must have recourse to "objective meaning". The conclusion is that objective meaning is capable of manifesting as synchronistic events, wholly independent of a mind predisposed to register meaning. It gainsays the basic definition of synchronicity as "inner" and "outer" facts in meaningful relation.

Jung's metaphysical edifice, it seems, lands in an out-and-out Neoplatonic system. Jung once conceded to an interviewer that he had had seconds thoughts about it, designating his metaphysical edifice as "awkward". I think we must see Jung's metaphysic against the backdrop of the Neoplatonic philosophers, such as Proclus. Proclus reckoned with the pagan deities and devoted himself to *theurgical* practices

(white magic) during the day. According to Jung and von Franz, there are entities capable of quasi intelligence. They abide in a transcendental sphere where they occupy themselves with “the primal ordering of existence” (citing Chinese myth, p.298). They can be invoked by means of mantic procedures: “[The] use of a divinatory oracle represents an attempt to induce a spontaneous manifestation of the remaining autonomous spirit…” (ibid. p.226). This is close to the Neoplatonic notion of pagan deities and their invocation for the purpose of attaining unity with them. It coincides with von Franz’s alchemical goal of “union of the total man with the unus mundus” (ibid. p.173).

Synchronicity also bears resemblance to the Neoplatonic emanative influx model, which speaks of an inflow in the world of the spiritual force. Arguably, Proclus and his predecessors make better sense of the Neoplatonic model. From an intellectual point of view, it would be more honest to take the full step, remove the contradictions in von Franz’s account, and develop Jung’s metaphysic as a modern version of Neoplatonism.



Proclus

Proclus

Proclus of Athens (412-485) had a pronounced influence on the development of late Neoplatonic thought. In order to meet the success of Christianity, the Neoplatonic philosophers had to defend the Hellenic traditions of wisdom and ancient pagan religious revelation. The following excerpt is from Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Proclus, 3.3 ‘Psychology and Epistemology’, here). To the reader knowledgeable in Jungian psychology, the many points of correspondence are obvious.

> As with many other Platonists, Proclus’ epistemology is based on a theory of *innate knowledge* (in accordance with the Platonic dictum that ‘all learning is recollection [*anamnêsis*]’). Proclus refers to the innate contents of the soul as its reason-principles (*logoi*) or Forms (*eidê*). These innate reason-principles constitute the essence of soul. That is why they are called ‘essential reason-principles’ (*logoi ousiôdeis*) (Steel, 1997). The traditional translation reason-*principles* was chosen on purpose, because on an ontological level these same *logoi* serve as principles of all things. They are extended or unfolded images of the Forms that exist in intellect; and by means of them the world-soul with the assistance of Nature brings forth everything. In other words, the psychic *logoi* are instantiations of Platonic Forms on the level of soul as are the *logoi* in Nature and the forms immanent in matter. According to the fundamental Neoplatonic axiom *panta en pasin* (‘all things are in all things’), Forms exist on all levels of reality. But the *logoi* in soul also offer the principles of all knowledge and are the starting points of demonstration. At *In Parm.* IV 894.3-18 (ed. Steel) Proclus argues that only with reference to these notions within the soul predication is possible (see Helmig, 2008), since they are universal in the true sense of the word. On the other hand, both transcendent Platonic Forms and forms in matter are not taken to be universals proper by Proclus. The former are rather intelligible particulars, as it were, and cannot be defined (Steel, 2004), while the latter are strictly

> speaking instantiated or individualised universals that are not shared by many particulars (see Helmig, 2008, cf. above 3.1-2). For this reason, it does not make much sense to talk about 'the problem of universals' in Proclus.
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> It is another crucial assumption of Proclus' epistemology that all souls share the same *logoi* (*Elem. Theol.* § 194-195). In terms of concept-formation this entails that psychic concepts, once they are grasped correctly, are universal, objective, and shareable (see Helmig, 2011). Moreover, if all souls share the same *logoi*, and these *logoi* are the principles of reality (see above), then by grasping the *logoi* souls come to know the true principles or causes of reality. Already Aristotle had written that to know something signifies to know its cause (*Met.* A 3, 983a25-26 and *An. Post.* I 2, 71b9-12) […] On the whole, Proclus' reading and systematisation of Plato's doctrine of learning as recollection makes Platonic recollection not only concerned with higher learning, since already on the level of object recognition we employ concepts that originate from the innate *logoi* of the soul (Helmig, 2011) […]
>
> Proclus argues at length that the human soul has to contain innate knowledge. Therefore, one should not consider it an empty writing tablet, as Aristotle does (Aristotle, *De anima* III 4). He is wrong in asserting that the soul contains all things potentially. According to Proclus, the soul contains all things (i.e., all *logoi*) in actuality, though due to the 'shock of birth' it may seem as if the soul has fallen to potentiality. At *In Crat.* § 61, Proclus asserts that the soul does not resemble an empty writing tablet (*agraphon grammateion*) and does not possess all things in potentiality, but in act. In *Eucl.* 16.8-13 expresses the same idea: "the soul is not a writing tablet void of *logoi*, but it is always written upon and always writing itself and being written on by the intellect." As with his philosophy of mathematics, Proclus presents a detailed criticism of the view that universal concepts are derived from sensible objects (by abstraction, induction, or collection)… (Helmig & Steel, 2012, here).

Thus, there are many points of agreement in terms of metaphysical aspects and psychic structure. *Symbols* play a central role in Jungian psychology. This notion is also present in Proclus. Proclus' notion that celestial realities are reflected in sensible things is central to Swedenborg, who was a major source of inspiration for Jung.

> As stated before (cf. 3.3), the human soul contains the principles (*logoi*) of all reality within itself. The soul carries, however, also *sumbola* or *sunthêmata* which correspond to the divine principles of reality. The same symbols also establish the secret correspondences between sensible things (stones, plants, and animals) and celestial and divine realities. Thanks to these symbols, things on different levels (stones, plants, animals, souls) are linked in a 'chain' (*seira*) to the divine principle on which they depend, as the chain of the sun and the many solar beings, or the chain of the moon. Of great importance in the rituals was also the evocation of the secret divine names. In his *Commentary on the Cratylus*, Proclus compares divine names to statues of the gods used in theurgy (*In Crat.* § 46), pointing to the fact that also language is an important means in the ascent to the divine (ibid.).

The human soul is endowed with innate knowledge. The presence, in the pupil's soul, of a priori potential knowledge means that the primary agent of the pupil's progress is himself (cf. O'Meara, 1990, p.154). He must search inside himself. The enormous focus that Jung has on the excavation of the secrets of the unconscious, depends on the Neoplatonic conception of innate ideas as psychic *archetypoi* or *logoi*. Proclus explains mathematicals as 'projections' by the soul of innate intelligible principles. Mathematical principles, and the quantitative aspect of number, are projections by the human soul of higher principles that guide the making of the world. The psychic mathematicals are foundational to soul's nature. Thus, both the soul and the world are governed by the divine aspect of number and mathematicals. It builds on Proclus' notion that number has also a non-mathematical sense. He denotes their properties as 'the paternal', 'the generative', 'the perfective', 'the protective', etc. Mathematical terms must be understood in a higher sense (ibid. pp.164-206). Proclus bestows on number qualitative aspects and

world-creating properties as building stones of both psyche and world.
M-L von Franz gives voice to the same idea in *Number and Time* (1974). Proclus' philosophy is almost like the blueprint of Jungian psychology.

Emanuel Swedenborg
(Wikimedia Commons)

Swedenborg

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was a Swedish scientist, philosopher, and religious writer. He began having visions in 1743, resigned his position as assessor of mines (1747) and devoted himself thereafter to psychical and spiritual research.

> A severe religious crisis in 1743-5, accompanied by increasing dreams and visions, made him turn his attention to religious matters; and when a vision of Jesus Christ resolved his crisis, he spent the rest of his life expounding his understanding of Christianity in Neoplatonic terms. Among many works, the 8-vol. Arcana Caelestia (Heavenly Secrets) and The True Christian Religion (1771) give vivid descriptions of his spiritual experiences. His followers, after his death, organized, in 1787, the New (Jerusalem) Church, though this is meant to complement, not supplant, existing Churches (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of World Religions, 1997, here).
>
> He viewed all things as created by divine love and according to divine wisdom. Each material thing corresponded to a "spiritual form." Swedenborg thus achieved a modified Neoplatonism: all effects in the material world have spiritual causes and therefore a divine purpose (Encyclopedia of World Biography, 2004, here).

C.G. Jung read Swedenborg intently during his student years. He took up Swedenborg again during his crisis years, following the break with Freud. Regardless of the many otherworldly representations in Swedenborg, there are several formal points of agreement with Jung. Central to Swedenborg is the notion of *correspondence*. He said that everything material has a spiritual correspondence and that material things came into being and are sustained by the constant influx (inflow) of their corresponding form in the spiritual realm. Comparatively, *synchronicity* builds on the correspondence of events in the sense of their archetypal meaning. The archetypal 'absolute knowledge' makes an inroad in the physical universe, and so it represents a form of influx.

Grand Man

Jung was especially attracted to Swedenborg's notion of the Grand Man (Maximus Homo, Maximo Corpore, Universal Human). "Heaven is ordered by the Lord in such a way that it is like a Human Being, on account of which it is called the Grand Man. Consequently everything in the human being corresponds to it" (AC n.4321).

> The Grand Man consists in heaven in its entirety, which in general is a likeness and image of the Lord. Correspondence is a correspondence of the Lord's Divine with the celestial and spiritual things of heaven, and of those celestial and spiritual things of heaven with natural things in the world, primarily those in man. Thus there exists, by means of heaven or the Grand Man, a correspondence of the Lord's Divine with man and every individual part of him, so much so that man comes into being from that correspondence and is all the time coming into being, that is, is kept in being, from it (ibid. n.3883).

The spiritual is the principle and origin of the natural, without which the natural cannot possibly exist, nor subsist. Although our organs have been formed according to the external world, the latter is dependent on the influx from the Grand Man. All things that are extraneous to man have acquired their natural properties in order for the organs to correspond to the Great Man. Since air waves make hearing possible to the human ear, also the atmosphere depends on the influx of a spiritual principle. Spiritual things therefore are necessary with which natural things may correspond (cf. SE n.4066). Remarkably, the Grand Man even has heartbeats and draws breaths, in correspondence with the heart and its systolic and diastolic motions (cf. AC n.3884). In fact, it is the Grand Man only that lives, as all other beings lack life from themselves, but are only organs of life. There is no vital flame dwelling within and kindling life (cf. SE n.1313).

> Whatever exists in the human being, both in the external man and in the internal man, has a correspondence with the Grand Man. Without that correspondence with the Grand Man — that is, with heaven, or what amounts to the same, with the spiritual world — nothing can ever come into being and remain in being. This is because it does not have a connection with anything prior to itself or consequently with Him who is the First, that is, with the Lord. Nothing that lacks such a connection, thus that is independent, can remain in being for even a single instant. For everything that remains in being does so entirely by virtue of its connection with and dependence on what brings it into being; for remaining in being consists in a constant coming into being.
>
> [2] From this it follows that not only all the individual parts of the human being correspond to the Grand Man but also every single thing in the universe. The sun has a correspondence, and so does the moon; for in heaven the Lord is the Sun, and the Moon too. The fire and heat of the sun, as well as its light, have a correspondence, for it is the Lord's love towards the whole human race that its fire and heat correspond to, and His Divine truth that its light corresponds to […] Everything under the sun has a correspondence — every single thing beneath it in the animal kingdom and every single thing beneath it in the vegetable kingdom. And unless the spiritual world were flowing into them all, every one, they would instantly break down and fall to pieces (AC n.5377).

Swedenborg says that there is a correspondence between light and divine wisdom. Physicist Peter Russell (*From Science to God*) has a similar idea. He sees close parallels between the light of physics and the light of consciousness. Light is very fundamental to the universe whereas consciousness is necessary for our capacity to experience the world. Arguably, Russell has struck upon a Swedenborgian correspondence. The spiritual world comprises heaven, hell, and an intermediary region called the *world of spirits*. There is a constant inflow from the Celestial Kingdom (heaven) into the world of spirits. The latter realm, which is not a fixed place but rather a state of spirit, rhymes with the modern notion of the unconscious. The higher heaven (the celestial realm, Maximus Homo) could be interpreted in modern terms as a deeper stratum of the unconscious or, alternatively, the *unus mundus*. Jungian author Edward F. Edinger takes the full step and advances a view along Swedenborgian lines: the individual acquires divine status when the personality after death is transformed into an "archetype". According to Edinger, the personal ego attains eternal life as it takes its abode in the Platonic sphere beyond time and space (cf. Winther, 1999, here).

Inward heaven

It is evident that Swedenborg was on the brink of discovering the unconscious. He originally used the term *inward heaven* (or 'inner heaven', 'inner man', etc.) to denote the world of spirits as experienced during introspection. The *very inward heaven* denotes the part of the soul that corresponds with the celestial realm, which is the highest heaven. It is not evident that Swedenborg, during his seances, can tell the difference between the inward heaven and the world of spirits. To Swedenborg, it is self-evident that the inward heaven is essentially the same as the spiritual sphere, where life will continue after death. He emphasizes that neither the world of spirits nor the heaven is a metaphysical realm but denotes a state of spirit and state of life, such as the life of love, charity and faith. "The world of spirits is not a fixed place, between heaven and hell; but it is the state in which people are when between heaven and hell" (SE n.5162; cf. n.5125). Thus, Swedenborg does not distinguish the inward heaven from the world of spirits. Swedenborg, it seems, is aware that he spends time in the inward heaven, even when he uses the notion 'world of spirits'. Since the world of spirits is not a place, but a state of spirit, there is no real metaphysical barrier. Our reasoning mind *is* already in the world of spirits.

> I was in the inward heaven, and with me at the time in their own world were certain spirits. And although I was in heaven, I was not in the embrace of some ecstatic mental imagery, but in my body. For the Kingdom of the Lord is within us, and if it pleases the Lord one can be brought into heaven anywhere, in whatever place one may be, yet not in any trance-like mental setting. I was then just as I am now, writing these words, but my inward part was in my outward part, with the result that there were also spirits present in whose company I was in their world. For our reasoning mind is in the world of spirits, as well as our desires, to which sensory functions in the body correspond (SE n.1609).

> From these facts I am now prompted to conclude that the inward heaven constitutes an inward person and controls everything organic in the body, from its beginnings in the brain, throughout their entire extension — which extension is the body. It controls them, I say, from within, so that the inward heaven constitutes a person as a consequence of its inward qualities, which are causes. Heaven's rational thought animates the organism, as rational thought usually does, that is, the inward organic substances (ibid. n.1617).

> This also makes it clear that every least mental image a person on earth or a spirit has when thinking, and even more when speaking, has its corresponding interacting state in the inward heaven, and the thought and speaking of that heaven its interacting state in the very inward heaven, and the thought and speaking of this heaven likewise its interacting state in the innermost. So every single mental image is some affection or general state of feelings in the inward regions. Otherwise no thinking would ever have been able to come forth and be alive (ibid. n.2588).

Thus, there are interactive unconscious mental states, pertaining to affection and feeling, that correspond with the ideational contents of consciousness. Furthermore, Swedenborg says that "[the] inward heaven, therefore, is at a level within the world of spirits. For the world of spirits is separate from heaven because spirits draw what is theirs from bodily elements, and so are joined to the bodily and worldly regions. So the world of spirits occupies the inward bodily regions" (ibid. n.1610). The spirit coincides with the inner states of mind, thus it is an inner experience. This is very close to a definition of the unconscious. When he refers to the world of spirit as a "place", that is, a world with extension, we must keep in mind that it is a mere appearance in the eyes of spirits. The spirits themselves experience spiritual properties as things and as extension in space.

> Apparent space and time follow the different states of mind that spirits and angels go through there. The units of spiritual time and space match the desires of their will and the resulting thoughts in their intellect. Apparent space and time, then, are real — they are predictably determined by one's state of mind (TC n.29).

Some spirits, Swedenborg explains, don't understand that these are mere appearances. By example, the material sun is a fire that emits heat and light.

Correspondingly, in the spiritual realm, the Lord appears as a sun that emits love and wisdom, in which the angels bask. Thus, the spiritual beings, which are departed souls, experience God as a sun on a blue heaven. The spirits are only capable of seeing spiritual entities and can no longer see the material sun, since they no longer have physical eyes. Thus, the constant outpouring of divine love acquires the form of the sun in their spiritual vision. Due to the correspondence with worldly reality, some spirits aren't even aware that they are dead.

Swedenborg also came close to the notion of unconscious impulses, since he viewed human impulses (but not moral qualities, which are acquirable during the course of life) as the influence of spirits either benign or evil. "What is good and true flows in from the Lord by way of heaven and so by way of the angels present with us. What is evil and false flows in from hell and so by way of the evil spirits present with us" (AC n.5846). The association between spiritual beings and the affections of the soul is very strong.

> I have been instructed by experience, that good spirits and angels are not only present with man, but that they also dwell in his affections; for each single affection is of great extension, and because the ultimate plane with man is in his affections, therefore this takes place when the Lord vivifies and thus arranges the affections; as, for instance, good spirits are in the affection of gardening, in which they fix, as it were, their dwelling places (SE n.4399).

Affections are rooted in the unconscious, where they are vivified and arranged by a higher power. They appear spontaneous and autonomous, almost as if they represent the feelings of an angel or spirit. Swedenborg alternately uses two terms for "mind," namely *mens* ('higher mind') and *animus* ('lower mind'). Generally, mens is used in the sense of the conscious rational mind, the higher level of will and understanding, whereas the animus ('lower mind', 'natural mind') relates to desires and ideas in connection with the body and the world. The notion of animus includes the vegetative soul in control of vital functions. The animus is the external and instinctual mind that human beings have in common with animals, and which gives people their inborn 'disposition'. Mens has a wider significance. The *anima* represents the soul ('interior man', 'inner self') in the sense of an inner spiritual faculty. Thus, the anima is used in a similar sense as in Jungian psychology. The anima is subject to the inflow of the Grand Man, which continues its descent into the mens (cf. CL n.101). The anima and the mind, as one, survive death as a spirit. The mens is the battleground of the higher, heavenly impulses of the anima, and the often crude physical urges of the animus (cf. Rose, 2009, ch.VII). The latter, as lower mind or natural mind, is similar to Jung's notion of the *shadow*, although not quite the same. Swedenborg asserts that male and female psychology are mirror images, that is, the female is like the male on the inside and vice versa. The male is love inmost, cloaked in wisdom, whereas inmost in the female is male wisdom. However, he is not consistent in his description of the inner mirroring of the sexes (cf. CL n.32). The fact that they mirror each other on the inside gives rise to the attraction between the sexes.

> With respect to the disposition of the male, reason sees that it is a disposition to know, understand, and be wise — a disposition to know in childhood, a disposition to understand in adolescence and early youth, and a disposition to be wise from this time of his youth on into old age. From this it is evident that the male is by nature or temperament inclined to develop his understanding, consequently that he is born to become intellect-oriented. But because this cannot happen apart from love, therefore the Lord attaches love to him according to his reception, that is, according to the spirit in him that wills to become wise (CL n.90).

> I also spoke with the angels concerning conjugial love, or that which exists between two conjugial partners who love one another, that it is the inmost of all loves, and such that partner sees partner in mind [animus] and mind [mens], so that each partner has the other in himself or herself, that is, that the image, nay, the likeness of the husband is in the mind of the wife and the image and likeness of the wife is in the mind of the husband, so that one sees the other in himself, and they thus cohabit in their inmosts (SE n.4408).

In Jungian psychology the mutual attraction between the sexes builds on a projection of the inner anima (in men) and animus (in women), as inner mirror images of the other sex. (The animus here has a different meaning than in Swedenborg, since the animus in women has the same function as the anima in men.) Conjugial love between man and woman is of central importance to Swedenborg, as it achieves the union of wisdom and love (affection and thought; good and truth; will and understanding), which purifies the life of the will; and also perfects and exalts it (cf. DW n.10). Thus, the love for depraved and filthy things can be resisted. Swedenborg uses the term 'love' in the sense of libido: "Love, which is the life of the will, constitutes the whole life of man" (ibid.). If true marriage love is not achieved on earth, the love problem must be brought to successful conclusion in heaven. The psyche is configured in descending order: anima-mens-animus. Comparatively, in Jungian psychology the integration of the anima (animus in women) is subsequent to the integration of the shadow. This is because the ego is outermost, so to speak, and the shadow stands between the ego and the anima.

> And so it is evident that the angels of the inward heaven are separate because of their earthly-minded characters, as said previously, while the angels of the very inward and innermost heaven are together throughout the universe; for no discordance can exist among those who are truly spiritual and heavenly, but only among the earthly-minded (ibid. n.626).
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> There are thoughts within the realm of ordinary or appearing thoughts that are not recognized as different, and these rule the ordinary or conscious thoughts. For a long time I used to suppose that those thoughts pertained to the inward person, thus to the angels of the inward heaven, but I was mistaken in that opinion, for I was able to learn through much experience that such thoughts do exist, and that there are spirits who are accustomed to and take delight in those thoughts (ibid. n.2524).

Thus, Swedenborg makes the conclusion that the *very inward heaven* is universal and truly heavenly, a notion reminiscent of the Jungian *collective unconscious.* When spending time in the *very* inward heaven he is in the most objective heaven, since the angels who live there lack a bodily correlate. The difference is that the *very* inward heaven isn't heritable, at least not in the Jungian sense. Swedenborg relates that "before the coming of the Lord into the world, there had been no other heaven than the inward one" (ibid. n.672). In that era people thought in earthly and concrete terms, and could not yet understand the very inward matters. As the *very* inward heaven is the same as the cognitive capacity to grasp spiritual motives of an advanced kind, there were no such faculty of the soul. The multitude of angels, having thoughts and characters of their own, accords with the multitude of archetypes in Jung: "There are as many archetypes as there are typical situations in life. Endless repetition has engraved these experiences into our psychic constitution…" (Jung, 1981, p.48). So, in a sense, there is the same *correspondence* between heavenly and earthly life in Swedenborg and Jung.

Discrete Degrees

Swedenborg puts great emphasis on the notion of *discrete degrees*, which means distinct levels, one higher or more internal than the other, yet contained within the prior degree. The degrees exist distinctly as separate realms. A Russian doll serves to illustrate this principle. The innermost little doll represents the must sublime or spiritual whereas the outermost doll represents the most worldly degree.

> Those angels, who knew that the universe, being so created, is a work that is continuous from the Creator right down to outermost things, and that, being a continuous work, it is, as a single chain, dependent upon, actuated by, and ruled by, the Lord who is the Common Centre, said that the First proceeding forth is continued down through a series of discrete degrees to outermost things in exactly the same way as an end is continued through causes into effects, or like that which produces, and the things produced in an unbroken series: and that this continuation is not only a continuation into, but also a continuation round about, from the First, and thence from each thing that precedes into the thing that follows from it, down to the last of all: and that

> thus the First, and, from it, all the succeeding things co-exist in their order in the last or outermost (DW n.12).

It is a model characteristic of the Neoplatonic worldview. Encyclopædia Britannica (2012) lists a number of features typical for Neoplatonic systems.

> **1**. There is a plurality of levels of being, arranged in hierarchical descending order, the last and lowest comprising the physical universe, which exists in time and space and is perceptible to the senses.
> **2**. Each level of being is derived from its superior, a derivation that is not a process in time or space.
> **3**. Each derived being is established in its own reality by turning back toward its superior in a movement of contemplative desire, which is implicit in the original creative impulse of outgoing that it receives from its superior; thus the Neoplatonic universe is characterized by a double movement of outgoing and return.
> **4**. Each level of being is an image or expression on a lower level of the one above it. The relation of archetype and image runs through all Neoplatonic schemes.
> **5**. Degrees of being are also degrees of unity; as one goes down the scale of being there is greater multiplicity, more separateness, and increasing limitation — until the atomic individualization of the spatiotemporal world is reached.
> **6**. The highest level of being, and through it all of what in any sense exists, derives from the ultimate principle, which is absolutely free from determinations and limitations and utterly transcends any conceivable reality, so that it may be said to be “beyond being.” Because it has no limitations, it has no division, attributes, or qualifications; it cannot really be named, or even properly described as being, but may be called “the One” to designate its complete simplicity. It may also be called “the Good” as the source of all perfections and the ultimate goal of return, for the impulse of outgoing and return that constitutes the hierarchy of derived reality comes from and leads back to the Good.
> **7**. Since this supreme principle is absolutely simple and undetermined (or devoid of specific traits), human knowledge of it must be radically different from any other kind of knowledge. It is not an object (a separate, determined, limited thing) and no predicates can be applied to it; hence it can be known only if it raises the mind to an immediate union with itself, which cannot be imagined or described (‘Platonism’. (2012). Encyclopædia Britannica).

There are two forms of degrees; discrete and continuous. The latter pertains to our physical worldview and how we normally reason along causal lines. But the discrete degrees have been neglected. Swedenborg maintains that it is necessary to think in terms of discrete degrees in order for us to apprehend the principle of correspondence. The discrete degrees are subject to influx that works downwards or outwards in the form of correspondences. They occur also in the natural world.

> Discrete degrees stand in relation to each other like thought and speech, or like an affection of the heart and a gesture, or like an affection of the mind and an expression of the face […] We call these degrees prior and subsequent, higher and lower, inner and outer; and in general they stand in relation to each other like cause and effect, or like an essence and its embodiment or aggregate of essences, or like an elementary substance and its derivative compound or amalgamation of elementary substances (LJ n.315).

> These three degrees of height exist in every person from birth and can be progressively opened, and as they are opened, the person is in the Lord and the Lord in him. The fact that there are in every person three degrees of height has not been known before (DL n.236).

> Regarded in itself, the natural degree of the human mind is continuous, but by correspondence with the two higher degrees, it appears, when elevated, as though it were distinguished into levels […] How this occurs can be comprehended from a conception of degrees of height as being one above another, with the natural or lowest degree serving as a kind of common

> covering enveloping the two higher degrees. As the natural degree is elevated to a higher degree, then, the higher degree accordingly acts from within upon the outer, natural degree and illumines it.
>
> The illumination, indeed, comes from within from the light of the higher degrees, but the natural degree which envelops and surrounds them receives it through a continuous ascent, thus more clearly and purely in the measure of its ascent. That is to say, the natural degree is enlightened from within by the light of the higher degrees discretely, but in itself is enlightened in a continuous progression (ibid. n.256).

The notion that degrees become enlightened from within during the ascent, would translate to *conscious integration*, through which the unconscious is enlightened by consciousness. However, to Swedenborg, although he is keen on lecturing the spirits, the light comes from within, and not predominantly from the higher mind (mens). In case of the animus, however, it receives its light from the rationality of the mens. Jungian psychology postulates that *individuation* proceeds through stages, a notion akin to the ascent through discrete degrees. These stages are associated with archetypes that must be consecutively integrated. Behind the *shadow* stands the *anima*, behind which is the *mana personality* (cf. Jacobi, 1973, pp.107ff). The upward series ends with the *Self* as goal of individuation. It coincides with Swedenborg's ultimate goal of union with the Lord, the difference being that the ascent may continue in postexistence.

Conjunction

The world was created by the emanations of the supreme being, the Universal Human, giving rise to the discrete degrees of existence. The movement back to wholeness consists in a return through the degrees, by way of conjunction, which is the union of the more elevated and spiritual degree with the outer or lower degree.

> Since the goal of the Lord's divine providence is a heaven from the human race, it follows that the goal is the union of the human race with the Lord (see 28-31). It follows also that the goal is that we should be more closely united to him (32-33) and thereby be granted a more inward heaven. It also follows that the goal is for us to become wiser (34-36) and happier (37-41) because of this union, because we are given heaven through our wisdom and in proportion to it, and this is what gives us happiness. Lastly, it follows that the goal is for us to have a clearer sense of our identity and yet to be more clearly aware that we belong to the Lord (42-44). All of these are part of the Lord's divine providence, because all of them are heaven, which is the goal (DP n.45).
>
> As regards the conjunction itself, it is this which effects man's regeneration; for man is regenerated by the fact that the truths in him are being conjoined with good, that is, that the things which belong to faith are being conjoined with those which belong to charity […]
> [2] It is manifest from what has been explained that the conjunction of good with truths (by which regeneration is effected) progresses more and more interiorly; that is, truths are successively conjoined more interiorly with good. For the end of regeneration is that the internal man may be conjoined with the external, thus the spiritual with the natural through the rational. Without the conjunction of both of these there is no regeneration […]
> [3] From this it may be seen that the truth in man must first become truth in will and act (that is, the good of truth), before the conjunction of the rational with the natural, or the internal man with the external, can take place […]
> [And] when this takes place, it can then be conjoined with the internal man, which conjunction becomes successively more interior, in proportion as more interior truths are implanted in this good (AC n.4353).

The discrete degrees of the soul corresponds with the architecture of the Grand Man, which means that the individual will acquire a higher place in heaven the more he progresses on the spiritual path during life.

> Since the angelic heavens are distinguished into three degrees, therefore the human mind is also distinguished into three degrees, because the human mind is an image of heaven, that is, it is a heaven in the least form. Hence it is that man can become an angel of one of those three heavens, and this is effected according to his reception of wisdom and love from the Lord… (IS n.16:6).

Thus, central to Swedenborg is the motif of wholeness in the sense of completeness, that is, a full-fledged life involving politics, business, social life, and family life (cf. Rose, Ch.IIId). Swedenborg prefers marriage before celibacy (cf. CL n.156). "[The] sphere of perpetual celibacy is repulsive to the sphere of conjugial love, the sphere of heaven itself" (CL n.54). He rejected monastic practices. Since the world is created in correspondence with the spiritual realm, we should take part in the world. Humanity may tune in with the spiritual inflow by seeing the correspondences in the world. Arguably, participation in worldly life could be regarded as a way of worship, in terms of Proclus (see above), who resorted to theurgical practices. If a merry feast is symbolic of heavenly conjunction, participation has a ritual function. Gardening is also regarded as a method for spiritual connection. Swedenborg lived as he learned, and joyfully engaged in society between his personal spiritual sessions. A neighbor's daughter asked him on several occasions to show her an angel. Swedenborg finally consented and led her to a curtain, which he pulled aside to reveal her own image reflected in a mirror (cf. Tafel, 1877, pp.724-25).

> I have spoken with some after death who, while they lived in the world, renounced the world and gave themselves up to an almost solitary life, in order that by an abstraction of the thoughts from worldly things they might have opportunity for pious meditations, believing that thus they might enter the way to heaven. But these in the other life are of a sad disposition; […] when they are taken up among the angels they induce anxieties that disturb the happiness of the angels, and in consequence they are sent away […]
> [2] Man can be formed for heaven only by means of the world. In the world are the ultimate effects in which everyone's affection must be terminated; for unless affection puts itself forth or flows out into acts, which is done in association with many, it is suffocated to such a degree finally that man has no longer any regard for the neighbour, but only for himself […] From this it follows that only to the extent that man is engaged in the employments of life can charity be exercised and the life of charity grow; and this is impossible to the extent that man separates himself from those employments (HH n.360).

Jung's insistence on worldly fulfilment, and his rejection of the spiritual path of the reclusive, mirrors Swedenborg's views. Jung's self ideal is worldly-oriented, a view associated with the quaternity (cf. Winther, 2013a, here). Interestingly, Swedenborg said that the number four signifies conjunction (cf. AC n.9103). To Jung, the *mysterium coniunctionis* is the central mystery of life. He makes frequent use of the term *coniunctio oppositorum* and related terms, in his books. Both thinkers rejected the trinitarian view of God and both are strongly focused on achieving unity of mind. "The mind ought to be one, and not divided; and to this state they are reduced in the other life" (AC Index n.13). However, it is a unity consisting of many conjoined parts, and not a unity achieved by standing aside from the flow of life. In many places in his biblical exegesis, Swedenborg returns to the motif of conjunction. His interpretations are tendentious, since they focus on extracting the underlying correspondences in the text. Genesis 40:20 ("And it came to pass the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants: and he lifted up the head of the chief butler and of the chief baker among his servants.") is interpreted in this way.

> That this signifies initiation and conjunction with the exterior natural, is evident from the signification of a "feast," as being initiation to conjunction (see n.3832), and also conjunction through love, and appropriation (n. 3596); and from the signification of "servants," as being the things of the exterior natural. For when man is being regenerated lower things are subordinated and subjected to higher, or exterior things to interior, the exterior things then becoming servants, and the interior, masters […] In old time feasts were held for various reasons, and by them was signified initiation into mutual love, and

> thus conjunction. They were also held on birthdays; and then represented the new birth, or regeneration, which is the conjunction of the interiors with the exteriors in man through love, consequently is the conjunction of heaven with the world in him; for what is worldly or natural in man is then conjoined with what is spiritual and celestial (AC n.5161).

Proprium

Although Swedenborg's thought is defined as Christian Neoplatonism, it's more apt to call it Psychological Neoplatonism. Swedenborg tends to interpret symbols in the way of 'signs' and not as 'unknowns'. Yet, his biblical exegesis in many ways accords with a modern psychological view. He understands the mental state of Adam and Eve as a pristine and celestial condition where 'understanding' (consciousness) and 'will' still exist in unity. Since their will was not separate from God, they existed in unconscious harmony with the divine. However, when mankind came under the influence of wickedness, they would also act accordingly, because their will was not separate from their understanding. So he points at the dangers of the unconscious condition, that is, its two-faced nature.

He explains that understanding and will became separated in the times of Noah, so that they could act independently. This solution was imparted by God. Noah's ark is symbolic of the new state of human psychology. The window upward in the ark, like an eye, suggests the gift of intellectual light. The door in the side suggests the perception by the will. He understands virtually all biblical events in terms of collective psychology and the progression of consciousness. The advantage of the separate condition of understanding was that it allowed Noah's people to be governed by the intellect. Although their will was no longer in unison with God, their knowledge about what is true and good would instead serve as guide. Thus, they were saved from the flood (cf. AC n.639ff).

Although S. doesn't exclude the notion of an antediluvian flood, he prefers to interpret it as the falsities which inundated the world, a flooding of passions and fantasies that make personality indignant, angry, pensive, despairing, and desiring. "Thus the more one is immersed in them, the more one is inundated. It is like a flood, for it takes place in the same way, so it is compared to waters" (SE n.4155). Thus, Noah's ark symbolizes a new form of inwardness, a new 'church', as a shelter from evils and falsities, which are 'the flood-waters' (AC n.876). Swedenborg says:

> If the ark with its coating of pitch, its measurement, and its construction, and the flood also, signified nothing more than the letter expresses, there would be nothing at all spiritual and celestial in the account of it, but only something historical, which would be of no more use to the human race than any similar thing described by secular writers. But because the Word of the Lord everywhere in its bosom or interiors involves and contains spiritual and celestial things, it is very evident that by the ark and all the things said about the ark, are signified hidden things not yet revealed. (AC n.639)

This shows that Swedenborg was far ahead of his time (and still is, in some quarters) in that he reasoned psychologically. Of special interest to Jungians is his notion of *proprium.* It is defined as our 'selfhood', our sense of awareness as separate and autonomous individuals. It has two forms, either human or heavenly (cf. NJ n.82). The human proprium, which is formative of our worldly identity, is characterized by self-love and love of the world. It notoriously leads us astray into self-righteousness and the evils of concupiscence. The notion is close to the modern notion of the ego, including the *synthetic function* that assimilates (appropriates) mental contents and causes the ego to identify with them. It also applies to nations, since they also have a proprium in the sense of a collective psychology (AC n.10283, tr. Elliott). John Bigelow says:

> The Proprium therefore in man is an appropriation to himself — that is, a selfish appropriation of divine resources. It is this idea, involving the sense and exercise of an absolute ownership of all one has or pretends to have and be, that is contained in Swedenborg's substantive, Proprium… (Bigelow, 2014, p.xxxii)

The proprium has a heavenly counterpart, imparted by the Lord. Personal identity evolves and takes a different expression, as the human proprium is successively improved. S. understands the Christ's salvational work as the bestowal upon mankind of the heavenly proprium. It served to rectify a world that had sunk completely into a hellish and devilish proprium:

> [The Christ] did so in order that from His own Divine Power He might within His own Human Essence unite the Divine Celestial Proprium to the human proprium, so that they became one within Himself. Had He not united them the world would have perished completely. (AC n.256)

S. says that man's voluntary proprium is vivified from the proprium of the Lord's Divine Human (Homo Maximus), or the celestial proprium. The proprium is then gradually perfected by the Lord (AC n.1947). Liberty consists in being led by the Lord, and by His heavenly proprium, which is received from the Lord by regeneration. Although this proprium appears to man as his own, it is not his, but the Lord's within him (cf. NJ n.148). The proprium of man must be willfully separated, in order that the Lord may be present with him (AC n.1937). Thus, it requires an effort of will — one must take charge of oneself and better one's character:

> But when a person does fight as if in his own strength and yet believes that he does so in the Lord's, he does make those things his own. This gives him a new proprium or selfhood, called a heavenly proprium, which is a new will. (AC n.8179)

Characteristic of the regeneration is that personality acquires a different rationale. The 'second rationale' means that the Lord is acknowledged as the source of good and truth, whereas the 'first rationale' implies that personality remains identified with the mental content. The first rationale is gradually being separated (AC n.2657).

> But it should be recognized that although a person is being regenerated, every single detail belonging to the first rational still remains with him. It is merely separated from the second rational, which the Lord effects in a miraculous fashion. (ibid.)

Swedenborg's notions bear a resemblance to the Jungian theory around the integration of the Self, especially as the Homo Maximus (the Lord as the image of man) is regarded an 'inner' presence.

> The things that belong to the internal man are the Lord's, so that one may say that the internal man is the Lord. (AC n.1594)

> [The] interior things are nearer to the Divine and exterior ones more remote from Him. This is the reason why that which is highest means that which is inmost. (AC n.5146)

Thus, the human proprium is under sway of the heavenly proprium, which grows stronger and stronger, until its influence is complete. The angelic (archetypal) freedom of will, i.e., their elemental consciousness, is reminiscent of archetypal theory. Evidently, it's the extant angelic proprium that leads to rebellious behaviour, when they abscond to the conscious realm (or in myth, descend to earth). The separate nature of the heavenly (inner) proprium, and the progression that leads to a stronger and stronger domination by the heavenly proprium, are important similarities with Jungian theory. The heavenly proprium progresses and evolves, as an integral part of the human soul. It is separate from the human proprium. Its effect on the latter is therapeutic and it induces a moral and intellectual improvement. "And when the Lord from His mercy instills into this proprium innocence, peace, and good, it still looks like the proprium, but it is now something heavenly and richly blessed…" (AC n.252). The unconscious is denoted "internal man" or "inner heaven". "[The] internal man is as different from the external as heaven from earth" (AC n.978).

Jung's notion of self is very similar. In *Concerning Rebirth* he says that the transformation processes strive to approximate ego and Self to one another (cf. Jung, 1981, p.131). The Self's effect on the ego is secondary and therapeutic in that it effectuates wholeness and serves as a guide for the ego, leading it to higher realizations. Thus, the ego mustn't identify with the Self, but remain separate from it.

In Jung's model the ego has acquired a very central status as the locus of integration, and thus it cannot be transcended. It coincides with Swedenborg's view. However, whereas Jung regards the ego as a neutral concept, Swedenborg's egoic proprium is infernal. The heavenly proprium is the only thing that can save us from profaneness, self-indulgence, and self-righteousness. I put forth that Swedenborg's view of the ego (proprium) as "hellish" to its nature could at least begin to explain the notorious pathological symptoms in the ego. Perhaps the personal shadow has been underestimated in Jungian psychology.

Active imagination

As Gary Lachman (2010, ch.5) notes, both Jung's technique of *active imagination* (cf. Wiki, here) and Swedenborg's spirit-seeing, resemble an auto-symbolic form of hypnagogic imagery. Psychoanalyst Herbert Silberer discusses this phenomenon:

> Lying one evening in bed and exhausted and about to fall asleep, I devoted my thoughts to the laborious progress of the human spirit in the dim transcendant province of the mothers-problem. (Faust, Part II.) More and more sleepy and ever less able to retain my thoughts, I saw suddenly with the vividness of an illusion a dream image. I stood on a lonely stone pier extending far into a dark sea. The waters of the sea blended at the horizon with an equally dark-toned mysterious, heavy air. The overpowering force of this tangible picture aroused me from my half sleeping state, and I at once recognized that the image, so nearly an hallucination, was but a visibly symbolic embodiment of my thought content that had been allowed to lapse as a result of my fatigue. The symbol is easily recognized as such. The extension into the dark sea corresponds to the pushing on into a dark problem. The blending of atmosphere and water, the imperceptible gradation from one to the other means that with the "mothers" (as Mephistopheles pictures it) all times and places are fused, that there we have no boundaries between a "here" and a "there," an "above" and a "below," and for this reason Mephistopheles can say to Faust on his departure,
>
> "Plunge then. — I could as well say soar."
>
> We see therefore between the visualized image and the thought content, which is, as it were, represented by it, a number of relations. The whole image resolves itself insofar as it has characteristic features, almost entirely into such elements as are most closely related to the thought content. Apart from these connections of the material category, the image represents also my momentary psychic condition (transition to sleep). Whoever is going to sleep is, as it were, in the mental state of sinking into a dark sea. (The sinking into water or darkness, entrance into a forest, etc., are frequently-occurring threshold symbols.) The clearness of ideas vanishes there and everything melts together just as did the water and the atmosphere in the image (Silberer, 1971, pp.237-8).

Silberer connects this with his theory of *multiple interpretations*, which implies that the unconscious creatively associates the conscious content with a symbol selected from an infinite series of possibilities. Thus the image can be interpreted along conscious lines (i.e., from the ideas that caused the image) or in terms of the sometimes deep unconscious symbols. He holds that the latter may develop into something that contradicts the conscious ideas, giving rise to contradictory interpretations. To Swedenborg, however, there is no contradiction between the conscious standpoint and the symbolic image, since the spiritual level of the soul determines what images the spiritual content will translate into. What Swedenborg experiences in the spiritual world does not contradict his conscious ideas. Swedenborg lectures spirits, sometimes of great renown. But when he and other spirits are instructed by an angel, my impression is that the words could equally well have come from Swedenborg's mouth.

> I once prayed the Lord to be allowed to talk with the disciples of Aristotle, and at the same time with the disciples of Descartes and those of Leibnitz, in order to learn what opinions they held on the interplay between the soul and

> the body. My prayer was answered by the appearance of nine men, three Aristotelians, three Cartesians and three Leibnitzians […]
>
> The nine men on seeing one another began with polite greetings and conversation. But soon afterwards a spirit rose up from the underworld carrying a torch in his right hand, which he shook in their faces. This made them three by three to become enemies and they glowered at one another; for they were gripped by a desire to quarrel and dispute […]
>
> On the conclusion of this debate, the spirit carrying the torch appeared again, but now holding it in his left hand. He shook it towards the backs of their heads, so causing the ideas of all of them to become confused, and they cried out: 'Our soul does not know, neither does our body, which side to take. So let us draw lots to settle the dispute, and we will support the view represented by the first lot drawn.'
>
> So they took three slips of paper and wrote on one 'Physical Inflow', on the second 'Spiritual Inflow' and on the third 'Pre-established Harmony'. They put the three slips into a hat held upside down and selected someone to draw one. He put his hand in and grasped with his hand the one on which was written 'Spiritual Inflow'… (TC n.696).

However, Swedenborg also has experiences which are less prescriptive.

> It is not easy to describe understandably, let alone make clear to a person on earth, what the symbolic mental images of the angels of the inward heaven are like. Nor can a person on earth be aware of them except by the Lord's infinite mercy.
>
> What I have been able to watch on several occasions were displays inexpressible in words, which move one's feelings, being portrayals of the feelings by means of angelic or heavenly shapes. For example, something is portrayed in an angelic manner that presents an image or appearance of a heavenly cloud, a shower, or breeze, or light of day. This is done by an image indescribable in words, and there is a feeling that is in or together with the image. Then, as that display increases, decreases, or varies, so likewise the feeling increases, decreases or varies. The feeling is grasped either perceptively, or by understanding, thus either in the heavenly or in the spiritual manner (SE n.2186).

Jung understands active imagination differently than Swedenborg and Silberer. Archetypal contents of the *unconscious* are translated into images that are remote from the conscious standpoint, often evoking a crisis of consciousness. According to Silberer, it's the other way round; it's the *conscious* contents that become translated into images. There is not much in Swedenborg's spiritual experiences that confirms Jung's view of visionary experiences incongruous with consciousness. It could be argued that active imagination is, in fact, a prolongation of consciousness whereby conscious contents are articulated in the form of images and feelings, following Swedenborg's law of correspondence. Thereby the scope of the conscious idea is extended, allowing consciousness to look upon it from another angle. But it would mean that it is a much less potent technique than how Jung envisages it. Many of Swedenborg's experiences are redundant, and sometimes they border on the trivial.

Comparatively, dreams tend to be remote from consciousness. Sometimes it takes many years to understand a dream, which also Jung attests to. On the other hand, while doing active imagination, he is sometimes capable of understanding the motives immediately, already during the sitting. This he had in common with Swedenborg. Arguably, active imagination is more valuable during a crisis of consciousness, when the images may express what the conscious ego knows but hesitates to express in words. However, following Silberer, it is possible that the images inspired by consciousness will become contaminated with unconscious content proper. The unconscious has a way of sneaking in contrarian elements, like Freudian slips, in the general picture. These elements would be the only really valuable. It would mean that it's necessary to apply a method different from dream interpretation when elucidating an active imagination. One should take the best plums out and the rest should be regarded as mere art.

For instance, in Swedenborg's active imagination of the satyrs (see Appendix) there

is a slight mishap at the end. The satyrs, by a roundabout turn, go back to their lustful life, despite having received Swedenborg's reformative teaching. Perhaps it means that Swedenborg himself would not be able to restrain his lust for womankind, and before long he would take himself a 'frilla' (official mistress) again. Nevertheless, I am inclined to believe that active imagination is foremostly a leisure activity, like gardening, which is wholesome because it is spiritually invigorating.

Evaluating Swedenborg's worldview

It remains to be said that Swedenborg system is unique. Encyclopedias characterize it as Christian Neoplatonism, but it isn't that simple, as his system is quite innovative. In important ways he deviates both from Neoplatonism and traditional Christianity. He rejects the asceticism of historical Neoplatonism. In keeping with his theory of correspondences, the material world isn't regarded as degenerate, as such, which is an important difference. In Neoplatonism, correspondences are not perfect. The semblance with the noetic Form is further reduced with each consecutive emanation, because it is yet more removed from the One. There are *resemblances*, but not correspondences proper. In the farthest emanation, there is no longer any correspondence at all.

In Swedenborg, however, all phenomena have transparent spiritual meaning, because there is no emanative degeneration. Swedenborg sees putrid matter, filth and excrement, as perfectly spiritually correspondent, because it is regarded as delightful and sweet-scented matter by the inhabitants of Hell. Such spiritual dualism, of heaven and hell, does not occur in Neoplatonism. Rather, evil derives from the deprivation of Form. This view gave rise to St Augustine's notion of evil as the privation of good, which has caused great headache among philosophers and theologians alike. But, in Swedenborg, evil has Form, in the way of a mirror effect.

In fact, Swedenborg's system bears some similarities with Spinoza's *pantheistic* system. Perhaps his theory of correspondences is inspired by the Christian Platonist Nicolas Malebrance (1638-1715), who employs the term in his book *The Search after Truth*. M. discusses the correspondence of mind and body, although he uses the concept more loosely. Arguably, Malebrance's notion of *intelligible extension* has a bearing on this, as well. It means that all forms of nature are modes or modifications of divine intelligible form. Intuitively, it means that the natural world is interpretable in divine terms, which is what S. says. But it seems to me that Swedenborg's concepts have never been criticized by other philosophers, in order to see if they really work. All other great thinkers, like Malebranche and Spinoza, have been thoroughly scrutinized. I suppose philosophers take him for a theologian, and not a philosopher with a serious idea about how the world works.

Conclusion

Swedenborg and Jung have taken Neoplatonism into modern times, creating vastly more advanced systems than their antique predecessors. Experience and observation is given priority before philosophical exegesis. The Neoplatonic worldview has moved closer to where it belongs, namely the psyche. But the full step remains to be taken. My argument is that the psyche likes to portray itself in Neoplatonic terms, as a world with pagan deities and spirits. I once dreamt that I visited Neptune, where I socialized with invisible spirits, who could be experienced nevertheless. (This would have impressed Swedenborg, because he never met with spirits from the remote planet Neptune.) This is how the unconscious likes to express itself, but it says nothing about the metaphysical constitution of the world. I hold that the archetype is an expression of the animistic economy of the unconscious (cf. Winther, 2011a, here). Thus, the pagan and the Neoplatonic worldview is in the unconscious, but nowhere else.

Accordingly, it is legitimate to reason in such terms when investigating dreams and mythological products. But if the notions are allowed to spill over into worldly reality, it represents an invasion of the unconscious, with deleterious consequences. The strong focus on worldly realization, in both Swedenborg and Jung, exemplifies this problem. I hold that the Christian mystical path, involving reclusiveness, is equally viable. When enough is enough, the spiritual pilgrim should turn to the narrow path (cf. Winther, 2013b, here). Worldly fulfilment, in terms of power, wealth, sex, social

relations, ritual religion and theurgical practices, is a natural and necessary conduit of libido, especially in young people. But to elevate it as an ideal means to give way to an obsolete pagan paradigm and way of life. In the end, one realizes that it's all empty. Also active imagination, in the end, leads to empty results.

On the other hand, Jung's dependency on diverse and obsolete philosophical worldviews does not render his psychological method invalid. His method of dream interpretation functions finely because the unconscious likes to express itself in terms of "archetypes". (This method is also appropriated from Swedenborg, who called it *correspondentia fabulosa*. It means that we can spiritual correspondences in all symbolic products.) Marilyn Nagy wrote a book about philosophical issues in Jungian psychology. She identifies Jung as belonging to the epistemological tradition whose most prominent members were Kant and Plato. She laments his idealistic metaphysical view of reality, influenced by post-Kantian subjectivistic idealism, predominantly Schopenhauer. His *subjectivistic argument*, which implies that the only certain knowledge we have is of the inner world, is especially detrimental.

> There are many good reasons for being a follower of Jung's psychological views. Among them are his insights into the projective phenomena of transference relationships. Still more, his symbolic approach to the meaning of dreams is a most fruitful factor of my professional and my personal life. Still again, his writings are replete with a deep "wisdom of life" from which I have personally profited. However, Jung's subjectivist argument for the validity of psychic contents has brought, to my mind, only unhappy results.
>
> It has earned Jung isolation from both the scientific community on the one hand and from the philosophical and theological community on the other hand. It is likely that isolation from the scientific community would have occurred in any case, for we lack even today an appropriate philosophical or biological context for the kinds of contents Jung studied. But the subjectivist argument, if taken in earnest, makes nonsense of scientific endeavor. This is unnecessary (Nagy, 1991, p.31).

> I will not conceal the fact that during the years while I have been working on this project I suffered greatly, seeing the concepts which once were able to contain all that I knew of the depth and mystery of human experience reduced to their place in a historical series.
>
> Strangely enough, my work as a Jungian analyst has not been affected, or only minimally so, although I feared that would happen. Reflection on why this might be so led me to the realization that nothing which is truly real can be changed by a merely ego-bound concept of it. What is real in the work I do seems to be, first, the symbolic process — the mystery of the dream and the sense of "meaningfulness" by which it is apprehended by the dreamer. Secondly, and above all, what is real is the human relationship in which maturity and highest value are sought. This is not affected by the language which may be used to describe experience, although we may be hard put to find language to indicate highest value in an age which has found God contrary to nature.
>
> It may be that neither the terms which have traditionally been used in Western philosophical/theological thought nor the analogous terms which Jung used in his psychology will survive encounter with the facts that life in the modern world entails. We must beware of a subjectivistic epistemology which obtains unity in mental perspective at the cost of denial of the facts by which we after all live in the world of time and space. Yet I believe that we may joyfully affirm the reality of inner experience, even if none of the terms presently available in the structure of language seems a suitable vehicle of that experience (ibid. p.269).

Since Jung viewed psychic reality, but also outer reality, as based on archetypes, he must have expected earlier philosophical systems to rely on the archetypes, too, since one cannot evade their influence. The truth about reality can be acquired from the unconscious archetypes. Thus, he appropriated the beliefs that he found to be archetypal, because that means that they are true. This includes concepts from religious history, such as Mayan number gods and ideas from Chinese mythology. It leads to a highly conglomerative worldview which is unscientific and pagan in kind.

My view is that the spirit is subjectively experienced and that it should remain separate from a scientific worldview, as far as possible. We are capable of changing our worldview and way of life during the course of life. Therefore I believe that Jung's and Swedenborg's emphasis on achieving the unity (conjunction) of a multifarious self is detrimental. After all, it is a form of one-sidedness to be obsessed with a this-worldly self-ideal, always striving after completeness. The self as a *complexio oppositorum* isn't the whole truth about the human self. The self is really complementarian (cf. Winther, 2011b, here).

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Appendix

The Satyrs – an active imagination by Swedenborg.

My sight was opened to see a dark forest and in it a mob of satyrs. The satyrs' chests were hairy, and some had feet like those of calves, some feet like those of panthers, and some feet like those of wolves, with claws instead of toes.
These satyrs were running about, shouting, "Where are the women?" And I then saw some whores who were waiting for them. They, too, were monstrous in various ways.
The satyrs ran up to them and took hold of them, dragging them away into a cavern which was situated in the middle of the forest deep beneath the earth. On the ground around the cavern, moreover, lay a great serpent coiled in a spiral, which spewed its venom into the cavern. In the branches of the forest above the serpent, deadly birds of the night were cawing and shrieking. But the satyrs and whores did not see these things, because they were forms corresponding to their lascivious lusts and thus appearances visible usually only from a distance.

[2] They afterwards emerged from the cavern and went into a certain low shack, which was a brothel; and having parted from the whores the satyrs then talked together, to whose conversation I lent an ear (for speech in the spiritual world can be heard at a distance as though in one's presence, since an extent of space there is only an appearance). They were talking about marriage, nature and religion.
Marriage was the subject of those whose feet looked like those of calves, and they said, "What is marriage but legalized adultery? And what is sweeter than licentious charades and the deceiving of husbands?"
The rest responded to this with guffaws and clapped their hands in applause.
Nature was the subject of those whose feet looked like those of panthers, and they said, "What else is there but nature? Is there any difference between man and beast other than the fact that a man can articulate his thoughts in speech, while a beast can only make sounds? Do they not both have life from heat and understanding from light by the operation of nature?"
At this the rest exclaimed, "Oh, with what judgment you speak!"
Religion was the subject of those whose feet looked like those of wolves, and they spoke, saying, "What is God or the Divine but the inmost working of nature? What is religion but an invention to capture and bind the masses?"
In response to this the rest cried "Bravo!"

[3] Some moments later they burst forth, and as they did so they saw me in the distance looking at them with intent eyes. Angered at this, they rushed out of the forest and with a menacing expression hastened their way to me.
"Why are you standing here and attending to our whisperings?" they said. To which I replied, "Why not? What is there to stop me? They were audible utterances." And I

recounted to them what I had heard them saying.
At that their dispositions became calmer, and this because they were afraid of having what they said divulged. They also began to speak with restraint then and to behave with propriety, by which I recognized that they did not come from the lower classes but from worthier stock.
At that point I then related to them that I had seen them in the forest as satyrs, twenty of them as calf-like satyrs, six as panther-like satyrs, and four as wolf-like satyrs (there being thirty of them altogether).

[4] They were astonished at this, as they themselves had seen each other there only as men, just as they were now seeing themselves here with me. But I told them that that was the way they appeared at a distance because of their licentious lust, and that that satyr form was the form of their dissolute adultery and not the form of their person. I gave as a reason the following, that every evil lust presents a likeness of itself in some particular form, which is not seen by the people themselves, but by others standing at a distance. I then said to them, “To convince yourselves, send some of your number into that forest while the rest of you remain here and watch.”
So they did as I said and sent off two, and the rest saw them next to that shanty brothel altogether as satyrs; and when the two returned, they greeted them as satyrs and said, “Oh, what impostors!”
As they were laughing over this, I joked with them in various ways, and I reported to them that I had seen adulterers looking also like pigs. I also recalled then the story of Ulysses and Circe, how she had sprinkled Ulysses’s companions and men with Hecatean herbs and touched them with a magic wand and so turned them into pigs — “into adulterers, perhaps,” I said, “because by no art could she have turned anyone into a pig!”
After they finished laughing at these and similar remarks, I asked them whether they knew from what countries in the world they came. They said they came from various different countries and mentioned by name Italy, Poland, Germany, England, and Sweden. I then asked whether they saw anyone among them from Holland, and they said they did not.

[5] After that I turned the conversation to more serious matters, and I asked whether they ever considered that adultery is a sin.
“What is sin?” they replied. “We do not know what it is.”
I asked whether they ever remembered that adultery is against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue.
They replied, “What is the Decalogue? Is it not the catechism? What does that children’s booklet have to do with men like us?”
I asked whether they ever had any thought of hell.
They replied, “Who has come up from there and told us?”
I asked whether they had had any thought in the world regarding life after death.
They said, “The same thought as we did of animals, and sometimes the same as we did of ghosts, which, if they are exhaled from corpses, float away.”
Again I asked whether they had heard anything concerning any of these matters from priests.
They replied that they attended only to the sound of their voices, and not to the subject and what that was.

[6] Stunned by these responses, I said to them, “Turn your face and eyes to the middle of the forest where the cavern is that you were in.”
So they turned around, and they saw the great serpent coiled around it in a spiral and spewing in its venom, and also the baleful birds in the branches above it.
And I asked, “What do you see?”
But terror-stricken, they made no answer.
So I said, “Is it not a horrid sight that you see? You should know that it is a representation of adultery in the atrocity of its lust.”
Suddenly then an angel appeared standing near. He was a priest, and he opened a hell in the western zone into which people of this character are finally gathered. And he said, “Look over there.”
They then saw what appeared to be a lake of fire; and in it they recognized some of their friends in the world, who beckoned them to join them.
Having seen and heard these things, the men turned and hastened from my sight on a course away from the forest. But I observed their steps, seeing that they pretended

to go on a course away from the forest, but that by roundabout ways they made their way back to it (CL n.521).

Addendum

Carl Jung as idealistic philosopher

In *Answer to Job* (1969), Jung interprets God as a personification of the unconscious, longing to become conscious. It is essentially the same as Schopenhauer's idea. However, in Jung the unconscious Will is a *positive* force connected with the individuative drive of the individual as well as the collective.

The unconscious has acquired a metaphysical status in Jung. He is indebted to William James and his notion of *neutral monism.* It means that the mental and the material have a common ground. Jung denotes it the *unus mundus*, and characterizes it by the adjective 'psychoid'. Bertrand Russell also developed a form of neutral monism according to which the neutral stratum contains logical atoms, such as 'above', 'between', 'below', etc. Since these relational words can be combined with numbers, his metaphysical edifice seems to chime with M-L von Franz's notion of number qualities as metaphysical primitives. After all, 'aboveness' and 'betweenness' are qualities, too.

As referenced above, Neoplatonism has a notion of innate ideas as psychic *archetypoi* or *logoi.* According to Proclus the psychic logoi are instantiations of Platonic Forms on the level of soul. There are corresponding logoi in Nature, as forms immanent in matter. Proclus says that all souls share the same logoi. Since these constitute the true principles of reality, it is possible to know the true principles or causes of reality by grasping the logoi. The soul carries also 'sumbola', corresponding to the divine rules of reality. They establish the secret correspondences between sensible things and divine realities.

Proclus puts accent on the psychic mathematicals as building stones of both soul and world. Number has also a qualitative sense, and he analyzes their properties as the 'paternal', the 'generative', the 'perfective', the 'protective', etc.

The symbolic correspondences were central to Swedenborg who developed a highly psychological Neoplatonic system, putting emphasis on interiority. In Swedenborg, the inward heaven ('inner heaven', 'inner man', etc.) denotes the world of spirits as experienced during introspection. The notion corresponds to the unconscious. Since the world of spirits denotes a state of spirit and state of life (i.e., it's a mental and moral condition), it means that the inward heaven is metaphysically the same as the spiritual sphere. Here life is lived symbolically, while our conscious concepts acquire a symbolic shape. God, for instance, is by the spirits experienced as a shining sun. Thus, the essence of reality is life in the spirit, i.e., "psychic life". The material world is an emanation of a higher, or more inward, spiritual world. It is in the shape of a Grand Man.

Jung's metaphysics is firmly grounded in the Neoplatonism of Swedenborg, Proclus, and their forbears. To this is added Schopenhauer's ideas of an unconscious God that is evolving out of darkness. It is similar to the Neoplatonic concept of emanation. From William James derives the notion of a common ground for psyche and matter. However, since the logoi are the building stones of both psyche and matter, the notion is already present in Neoplatonism.

The conflicting paradigm of Gnosticism and alchemy does not play a big role, because Jung reinterprets these in terms of Neoplatonic psychology. In my regard, Jung belongs to Neoplatonic Christian tradition. Although his metaphysical and philosophical thinking does not introduce much new, he is on stable ground. In the school of Christian Neoplatonism his most important forbears are Emanuel Swedenborg and Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (who wrote in the late fifth or early sixth century CE).

Jung, in several places, expresses his metaphysical creed as 'esse in anima' (in opposition to 'esse in re' or 'esse in spiritu'). The view that nature, as well as the human soul, is an emanation of the world-soul (anima mundi), derives from the creator of Neoplatonism, namely Plotinus (c. 204/5-270). He was the first to introduce in the Western world a notion corresponding to modern idealism (i.e. that reality is essentially mental). It has its roots in Indian philosophy, where the world-animating spirit is called Brahman. Also Schopenhauer, whose notion of a world-soul developing out of darkness and giving rise to all the worldly forms, is indebted to Eastern philosophy, Vedantic and Buddhist thinking. Marian L. Pauson (1988) places Jung's philosophy "within the inheritance of Christian neo-Platonism" (p.82). She continues:

> Granted that the metaphysics of the two philosophers [Plotinus and Jung] can be separated by the contemporary subtleties of sign theory and philosophical analysis, striking similarities remain in the two systems […]
>
> If we look at these metaphysical concepts in relation to Plotinian categories, we find many similarities. The One of Plotinus and the 'unus mundus' of Jung both share the same ineffable unknowable realm. The Nous of Plotinus and the archetypes of Jung likewise point to a similar intuition concerning the primordial order of "what is." The universal soul of Plotinus and the world soul of Jung, both of which involve the dynamics of creation, matter, form, and good and evil, also suggest a similar intuition of reality as process. And in both philosophical schemes evil is accounted for at this third level, namely, the realm of Soul. In the realm of Soul, Jung's God-image is a projection of the archetype of the Self and like all archetypes is paradoxical; it has both positive and negative aspects […]
>
> Jung was very much steeped in the Christian tradition. He may not have agreed with the old theologians who accounted for evil as 'privatio boni', he may have accounted for evil in the psychological and religious sense as the dark or shadow side of both human beings and God and thus removed the total blame for evil from conscious individuals; nevertheless, the absolute of his metaphysical system, as the hypothetical 'unus mundus', is beyond good and evil. From this perspective, little difference appears between the intuitions of Jung and Plotinus about reality and the nature of evil. (Pauson, pp.87-88)

However, Pauson observes that their philosophical approaches are different. Jung, influenced by Kant, sees his own philosophical distinctions as subjective formulations, whereas Plotinus sees no separation between the conceptual scheme and the reality which it explains. That is why Jung called his philosophy "his myth", and it explains why his discourse keeps slipping from one realm to the other (cf. p.87).

Marilyn Nagy (1991) says that "I have identified Jung as belonging to the epistemological tradition whose most prominent members were Kant and Plato" (p.46). Interestingly, she also makes the following confession: "I will not conceal the fact that during the years while I have been working on this project I suffered greatly, seeing the concepts which once were able to contain all that I knew of the depth and mystery of human experience reduced to their place in a historical series" (p.269). Nagy concludes:

> This essay has shown that the conceptual structure of Jung's psychology is based on philosophical postulates which express an idealist and a metaphysical view of reality. Analytical psychology is a position-taking on philosophical issues of the nineteenth century. It embodies views, however, which are rooted in the search for moral values in ancient Greece and which have guided Western philosophical thinking ever since.
>
> Because he found a 'psychological' format for idealism which could lead into the twentieth century, Jung himself became the latest in a tradition of great idealist philosophers to have a powerful influence in the culture of their times.
>
> Though Jung never delineated a formal epistemological position it is possible, by following a developmental time line, and by studying a large number of his statements about what we know, to obtain a consistent picture of his views. Then, by examining the history of epistemological disputes, and

> particularly the moral issues which lay at the base of Plato's decision that true knowledge comes from within the mind, Jung's position can be matched with what philosophers have generally termed "metaphysical idealism." The immediate background of Jung's epistemology lies in nineteenth-century reaction to the new sciences, and the materialistic and positivist philosophies which accompanied the upswing of scientific influence. A certain type of radically subjectivistic neo-Kantianism was much favored at the end of the century, particularly by religionists who hoped thus to defend religious truths from the reductionist conclusions of scientists. Jung's views were entirely similar to those expressed by the subjectivist interpreters of Kant. Using this understanding of Jung's theory of knowledge we can then observe how it was applied by him in two specific cases: 1) Introversion, and the proposed resolution of conflict between inner and outer views through the subjectivized 'esse in anima' are the underlying foci of Jung's theory of types. 2) Jung's study of Paracelsus' doctrine of the 'lumen naturae', of knowledge through inner identity between subject and object, became the springboard for Jung's vast studies of the psychology of alchemistic thought […]
>
> The philosophical antecedents of Jung's theory of archetypes are to be found first in Plato's doctrine of transcendent causes, and secondly and more directly in Schopenhauer's dynamic theory of the Will. Nearly all the qualities of Schopenhauer's Will are found reproduced in Jung's theory of archetypes except that, unlike Schopenhauer, Jung insisted that the archetype is directive and form seeking. For this reason he continued to differentiate blindly instinctive from formal, meaning-giving archetypal activity in the psyche, even during the years when the results of experimental studies gave biologists increasing confidence in a phylogenetic source of behavior. In the speculations of his late years Jung extended his theory of non-material, archetypal causes beyond the sphere of individual psychic life to the realm of conjunction with the material world, in his theory of synchronicity.
>
> Jung's theory of individuation and its corollary doctrine of the self can be shown to exactly parallel the classic teleological scheme set out by Aristotle in his doctrine of the Four Causes, operating in a universe sustained by the Unmoved Mover. Aristotle's teleology, expressed in Christian theology as divine intentionality operating throughout creation, became standard doctrine in Western thought until it was challenged in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the development of technical machinery, discoveries in astronomy and physics, and by Kant's challenge to rational theology, and in the nineteenth century by the discovery of the thermodynamic laws and by Darwin's theory of evolution. (Nagy, pp.265-66)

In view of this, it is incorrect to paint Jung as metaphysically neutral. Of course, Jung did not want to be viewed as a religionist or a high-flown philosopher. Arguably, that's why he takes hiding behind the subjectivist credo and says that it's "his own myth". Yet, facts remain that Jung's edifice is firmly rooted in Neoplatonic idealism.

M. Winther

Abbreviations

AC Arcana Coelestia.

CL Conjugial Love.

DP Divine Providence.

DW Divine Wisdom.

DL Divine Love and Wisdom.

HH Heaven and Hell.

IS Interaction of the Soul and Body.

LJ Last Judgment Posthumous.

SE Spiritual Experiences.

NJ The New Jerusalem and its Heavenly Doctrine.

TC True Christian Religion.

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